

Site	Big River Sand
ID #	MD0981126899
Break	1.1
Other	3-19-81

March 19 1981

Mr Kenneth E Biglane (WH-548)
 Acting Director
 Hazardous Response Support Division
 U S Environmental Protection Agency
 401 M Street, S W
 Washington, D C 20460

40107921



SUPERFUND RECORDS

Dear Mr Biglane

The subject of this letter is the Regional Response Team review of control of mine tailings discharges to the Big River in the vicinity of Desloge, Missouri.

The mine tailings which are of interest came from a mill located on the outskirts of Desloge in St Francois County, Missouri. Mine tailings were stockpiled in the area near Desloge over a 30-year period from about 1929 to 1958. These tailings were transported from a nearby smelter by slurry pipeline to the site.

In 1972, this 500 acre site was donated by St Joe Minerals Corporation to the St Francois County Environmental Corporation, a not for profit body, for use as a sanitary landfill. This conversion also resulted in a shift of maintenance from St Joe Minerals to the landfill corporation. Landfill operations were begun in 1973.

In 1977, a section of the tailings pile washed into the Big River. Although the exact quantity of material which washed into the river is not known, estimates suggest this quantity could have been as large as 50,000 cubic yards. Physical evidence suggests that much of the erosion which has taken place at this location occurred in a single event.

Erosion continues at this site and although the current level of discharge is small, the potential exists for significant quantities of additional material to move into the Big River.

Both the U S Department of Interior and the Environmental Protection Agency have submitted this waste site as an example of a serious continuing pollution problem in support of Superfund legislation, and in hopes of ultimately obtaining the correction of the lead mine tailings problems. Fish (sucker family) in the Big River immediately below the mine tailings.

WJK bn

CONCURRENCES							
SYMBOL	EP&R	SVAN					
SURNAME	V. J. [Signature]	[Signature]					
DATE	19/03/81	3-26					

have lead concentrations (0.5 ppm) that are higher than the level (0.3 ppm) the World Health Organization has set as the maximum safe lead level in food for adults. The Missouri Department of Conservation and the Missouri Division of Health stated in a news release this summer that "people should be discouraged from eating large quantities of suckers from the Big River in Missouri's lead mining belt."

The Department of Interior Regional Response Team representative for this area informally requested an opportunity to sit down and discuss the current activities in regard to this site with the principals involved. Mr. Kesel stated the Department of Interior believes the problem is serious enough to be considered as a project under the recently passed Superfund bill.

On March 9, 1981, a meeting was held in the area offices of the Fish and Wildlife Service in Kansas City to review current status of the problems and steps toward a satisfactory solution. Dr. James Whitley, Missouri Conservation Commission, reported that several state agencies have acted in concert to get a commitment from St. Joe Minerals to provide significant remedial action at this site in the near future. Specific details of the commitment or the timing for remedial measures are not yet available. It was the consensus of the meeting participants that no actions should be taken now, which would inhibit completion and implementation of an agreement with St. Joe Minerals to take significant remedial actions in the near future. It was also discussed that the adequacy of the remedial actions was subject to review and possibly additional requests for remedial actions by the Regional Response Team at some future date. The group was requested to reconvene in the same location at 10:00 a.m. on May 18, 1981 to receive an update from the State of Missouri personnel on progress to date. No request for a formal Regional Response Team meeting has been made by either the Department of the Interior or the Environmental Protection Agency, and further actions will pend a review of progress on May 18. Other Regional Response Team members with potential direct interests in this site are welcome to attend the planned May 18 meeting.

Sincerely yours,

William J. Keffer
Chairman - Regional Response Team

Attachment

bcc Henry D. Van Cleave (WH-548-B)
William Rice, DRAD

BIG RIVER MILL
MOD 98117 X79
11

March 19 1981

Mr. Kenneth E. Biglane (WII-548)
 Acting Director
 Hazardous Response Support Division
 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
 401 M Street, S.W.
 Washington, D.C. 20460

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WJK bn

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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
SURVEILLANCE AND ANALYSIS DIVISION
REGION VII
25 FUNSTON ROAD
KANSAS CITY KANSAS 66115

March 19, 1981

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Acting Director
Hazardous Response Support Division
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
401 M Street, S.W.
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Sincerely yours,


William J. Keffer
Chairman - Regional Response Team

Attachment

DISTRIBUTION LIST

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